

TRUCIAL OMAN AND QATAR

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TABLE I—Continued

STATE	POLITICAL STATUS	CAPITAL AND POPULATION	REPORTED BOUNDARIES	REMARKS
KALBA	Trucial sheikhdom since 1957.	Kalba, 3000 to 5000	On the coast of the Gulf of 'Oman north at Dibba, south at Khor Kalba; includes territory on the west side of the mountains of 'Oman.	In the past tributary to Sharjah.
'OMAN	Independent British-protected sultanate.	Muscat, 500,000	Enclave on the peninsula of Masandam west at Sha'am, east at Dibba; main territory on Gulf of 'Oman east of Khor Kalba.	'Oman sovereignty over peninsula of Masandam established with British help.
OTHER TERRITORIES:				
FUJARAH	Sheikhdom without Trucial ~~status~~ .		Probably enclave in Kalba located primarily near the Gulf of 'Oman.	In the past probably tributary to Sharjah.
BURAIMI	Neutral area claimed by Saudi Arabia, 'Oman, and Abu Dhabi.	3000	Probably bounded by many Trucial sheikhdoms and 'Oman.	Inland oasis reported before 1945 and today under the influence of Abu Dhabi.
HAFT	Reported joint property of Abu Dhabi and 'Oman.			Near Buraimi.
DHAID	Reported as neutral part of Sharjah, and part of Kalba.			On motor road from the Persian Gulf to Gulf of 'Oman.
LIWA	Political control nowhere described.			Southwest of Abu Dhabi; reported to be trading with Abu Dhabi.

*Parts of the region between the boundaries of Qatar and the town of Abu Dhabi may be territory of Saudi Arabia. South of the town of Abu Dhabi there may be territory of the Trucial sheikhdoms or of Saudi Arabia or of 'Oman or of Aden Protectorates.

As Sir Percy Cox¹

writes: "The relative positions of the Principalities . . . depends almost entirely on the personalities of the ruling Shaikhs for the time being. Unfortunately, owing to the chronic prevalence . . . of . . . feuds, they have for the last few generations been a short-lived 'clan.'" Besides the territories of the sheikhs, there are neutral areas. In one of them, the Buraimi Oasis, near the border of 'Oman, a durbat (an official meeting of all the Trucial sheikhs with a British representative) took place in 1945;² this inconveniently located place was selected because sheikhs' wars prevented the choice of a better place near the coast. Another neutral area (although there seems to be a difference of opinion on its status) is the oasis of Dhaid,³ on the motorcar route from Sharjah to the

¹ O'Shea, *op. cit.* [see footnote 1, above], p. 171. See below (p. 204) for other claims to Buraimi.

² *Ibid.*, p. 156. See also Desmond Ventry-Fingard: From Hums to Oman by Car, *Congr. Rev.*, Vol. 47, 1952, pp. 544-545; reference on p. 553.

³ [For footnote, see p. 197 of text -- Analyst]

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in two miles from their entrances. Thus it was that the pirate tribes were able to build their towns behind these natural booms, and to carry on their ruthless calling in defiance of the British and Portuguese navies — and to earn for their stronghold the much feared and romantic name, "The Pirate Coast".

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Trucial Oman, as it is called today, is ruled by six independent sheikhs, bound under old treaties with Britain to maintain a maritime truce for the prevention of piracy and slave-trading. Family feuds and inter-tribal quarrelling are as common among them as are the rusty, ancient cannon. Many of the latter are no doubt from British men-o'-war, and some are still used for ceremonial occasions, a party afterwards being despatched to retrieve the cannon-balls.

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Unspoiled by time, Sharjah is one of the principal little towns, but it lacks the enchantment of Dibai, a picturesque centre a few miles along the coast to the west. A wide, shallow inlet divides Dibai and its waterfront of quaint little coffee-houses, and provides anchorage for dhows that bring transhipped goods from other continents. In the large market-place, spread on either side of the inlet and connected by a ferry-service of numerous little pole-propelled craft, the bedouin, with his henna-dyed beard and ancient rifle, can be seen fingering everything that is on show, from modern radio sets to

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ladies' lingerie, but he has little use for some of the strange products of The West.